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May 17, 2012

The Honorable Lisa Jackson
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Ariel Rios Building
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Jackson:

It is our understanding that the Ringwood Mines/Landfill Superfund Site will soon be going before the National Remedy Review Board for selection of a cleanup plan for the Peters Mine, Cannon Mine, and the O'Connor Disposal Area. The purpose of this letter is to express our collective interest in having all toxic materials removed from the site so that the Native American Ramapough community can finally rest knowing that their native land has been restored and that they need not worry about continuing contamination affecting their health and well-being.


This site has the ignominious legacy of being the only Superfund site in the history of the program that was delisted from the National Priorities List (NPL), and then relisted after additional contamination was discovered. In 2007 the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Office of the Inspector General, identified some shortcomings in the scope of the investigation that had occurred before the site was delisted from the NPL in 1994. Now under consideration in 2012 before the National Remedy Review Board, one option being proposed will be limiting the scope of the cleanup and evaluating whether a cap will be sufficient to protect the community.

The community has suffered long and hard and over a great many years – from the dumping of chemicals in the 1960s and 1970s, to the years of EPA tests and studies, to delisting and relisting, and now waiting with trepidation to hear about the selection of a cleanup. It is our belief that this site requires a full cleanup and one that does not include capping. This site is an area that is ridden with mine shafts that make the land susceptible to subsidence and sink holes. It is possible that toxic chemicals will leach. This site is in close proximity to a major water supply in the region and toxic chemicals emanating from the site could potentially pose a health hazard to the people living in the area. Finally, it is important to remember that the toxic waste at the site was purposefully dumped with little regard to the people that lived there.

This community has been patient as it has awaited the remedy selection. It is incumbent on the EPA to ensure that that selection is in keeping with the best interests of a community that has been relegated to living on the dumping ground for years too long. It is our hope that good

reason will come to bear and that a thorough cleanup will be selected as the only appropriate option for the Ringwood Mines/Landfill Superfund Site.

Sincerely,


Robert Menendez
United States Senator


Frank R. Lautenberg
United States Senator